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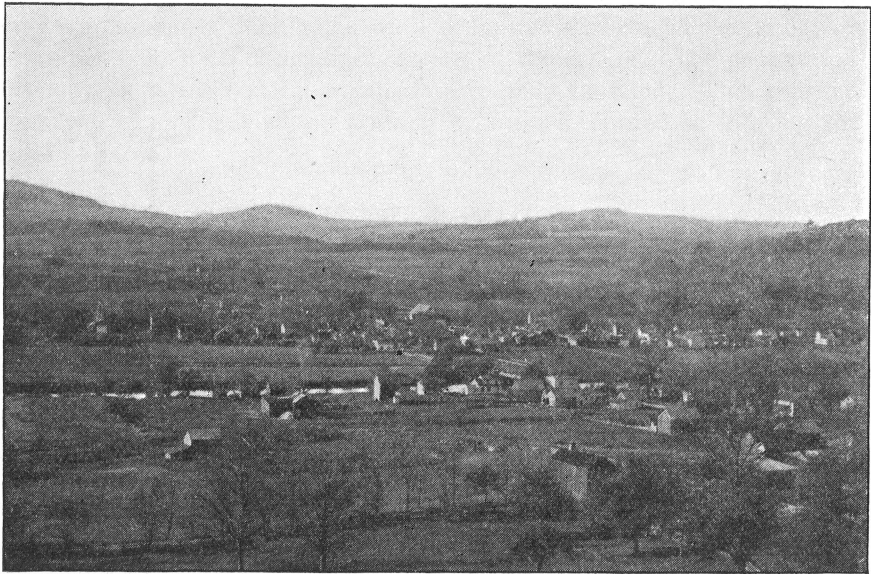
LESSON 158

COUNTRY LIFE SERIES

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Locating the Rural Community

DWIGHT SANDERSON



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THE CORNELL READING COURSE FOR THE FARM

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LOCATING THE RURAL COMMUNITY

DWIGHT SANDERSON

The core of the community idea, then — as applied to rural life — is that we must make the community, as a unit, an entity, a thing, the point of departure in all our thinking about the rural problem and, in its local application, the direct aim of all organized efforts for improvement or redirection. The building of real, local farm communities is perhaps the main task in erecting an adequate rural civilization. Here is the real goal of all rural effort, the inner kernel of a sane country-life movement, the moving slogan of the campaign for rural progress that must be waged by the present generation.—*The Farmer and The New Day*. By Kenyon L. Butterfield.

War activities and conditions brought rural people together as never before and gave them a new appreciation of the values and satisfactions of community life. The community is recognized now as the functional unit for the social organization of rural life. Institutions are planning the organization of their work on a community basis. A necessity has arisen not only for a clear understanding of the nature of the community but also for a method by which its area may be fixed. This bulletin, therefore, is prepared to assist those who are interested in locating the areas of rural communities.

WHAT IS THE COMMUNITY?

The community idea has become popular and the term is being used with a variety of meanings; thus, the school district, the village, the trade area surrounding a village, or even a county, are termed communities by some writers. Others discuss community as a generic term, applying it to any "area of common life."¹ It seems obvious, however, that if the community is to be made the local unit for social organization, a more definite, fairly tangible, and uniform, usage of the term "community" is essential.

One of the best definitions of a community has been given by Dr. Robert E. Hieronymus, Community Adviser of the University of Illinois: "A community consists of a group or company of people living fairly closely together in a more or less compact contiguous territory, who are coming to act together in the chief concerns of life." The community consists of the people within a local area; the land they occupy is but the physical basis of the community. Whether or not the people live closely together will depend upon the geographical character of the territory in which they live. In the Rocky Mountain States, many communities are but sparsely settled. Such a community may have a radius of fifty or a hundred miles and yet be a true community.

Dr. Hieronymus emphasizes that the people in the community area "act together in the chief concerns of life." That they are coming

¹ Community. Page 22. By R. M. Maciver. Macmillan Company. London, 1917.

to so act together more and more voluntarily measures the degree of community consciousness, for wherever there is a community its people must act together. The people of a community must associate in several of their more common interests if there is to be a true community. People associate in churches, schools, granges, and like institutions, but the constituency of any one of these associations is not necessarily a community. Only when several of the chief human interests find satisfaction in the organizations and institutions which serve a fairly definite local area tributary to them, do we have a true community. Usually, these organizations are located in a town or village which forms the community center, but a church, school, and grange hall near together in the open country may form the center of the social life of the community.

The term "neighborhood" is often used as synonymous with "community," but in the sense in which these terms are now coming to be technically employed, the neighborhood consists only of a group of houses fairly near each other. Frequently a neighborhood grew up around some one center, as a school, store, church, mill, or blacksmith shop, which in the course of time may have been abandoned, but the homes remain clustered together. The school district of the one-room country school is commonly a neighborhood, but as there are no other interests which bind the people together, it cannot be considered a community. Good examples of typical neighborhoods in the town of Ithaca (fig. 145) are Kennedy's Corners formed around the Methodist church, and Inlet Valley, where a neighborhood association meets at the school house. In many cases the neighborhood, particularly the school district, forms a desirable unit for certain purposes of social organization, but it cannot function in the same way as the community which unites the people in several of their chief interests.

This distinction has been well put by Kenyon L. Butterfield, president of the Massachusetts Agricultural College:

I wish to emphasize one point very strongly. We must not confuse a "community" with a "neighborhood." A neighborhood is simply a group of families living conveniently near together. The neighborhood can do a great many things, but it is not a community. A true community is a social group that is more or less self-sufficing. It is big enough to have its own centers of interest — its trading center, its social center, its own church, its own schoolhouse, its own grange, its own library, and to possess such other institutions as the people of the community need. It is something more than a mere aggregation of families. There may be several neighborhoods in a community. A community is the smallest social unit that will hold together. Theoretically, a community could live unto itself; though that would be actually impossible, just as it is impossible for an individual to live really a hermit. A community is a sort of individualized group of people. It is both the smallest and the largest number of people that can constitute a real social unit. It is a sort of family of families.²

² Mobilizing the rural community. By E. L. Morgan. Extension Bulletin 23. Introduction, p. 9. Massachusetts Agricultural College, 1918.

By summarizing these attributes of the community, we derive the definition: *A rural community consists of the people in a local area tributary to the center of their common interests.* The community is the smallest geographical unit of organized association of the chief human activities.

THE COMMUNITY AREA

We are indebted to Professor C. J. Galpin³, now in charge of Rural Life Studies of the United States Department of Agriculture, for having originated a method of determining the community area. Professor Galpin determines the community area by starting from the business center and marking on a map the farm homes which do most of their business at that center but which are farthest from it. This information is secured from the village merchants and is then checked by personal inquiry from the people on the edge or boundary of the community. The same procedure is followed with the surrounding communities. When this information is mapped, there is usually an overlapping of the trade areas with adjoining communities. People near the common boundary of two communities possibly trade more or less at both centers. This overlapping territory has been termed the "neutral zone." This same method of mapping is used also to locate the areas tributary to the village church, the school, the bank, the milk station, the grange, and like institutions. The boundaries of these areas do not coincide, as may be seen in figure 143, which shows several of these areas for a fairly typical rural community at Interlaken, Seneca County, New York. However, when the areas of the chief institutions are so located for the adjacent communities, it will be found that a composite of them will indicate a fairly clear line of demarcation between the areas tributary to the respective centers. That line which divides adjacent community areas so that most of those families either side of this line go most frequently to the center of which it is the boundary, or whose chief interests are at that center, will be the boundary of the respective communities. Thus, from the standpoint of location, a community is the local area tributary to the center of the common interests of its people.

THE COMMUNITY CENTER

The community "center" is essential to the individuality of any community. The community center need not necessarily be at the geographical center of the community; indeed in many cases it is at, or close to, one of its boundaries, tho in an open, level country it will tend to

³The social anatomy of an agricultural community. By C. J. Galpin. Agricultural Experiment Station of the University of Wisconsin. Research Bulletin 34, May, 1915; and, Rural Life, Century Company, New York. 1918.

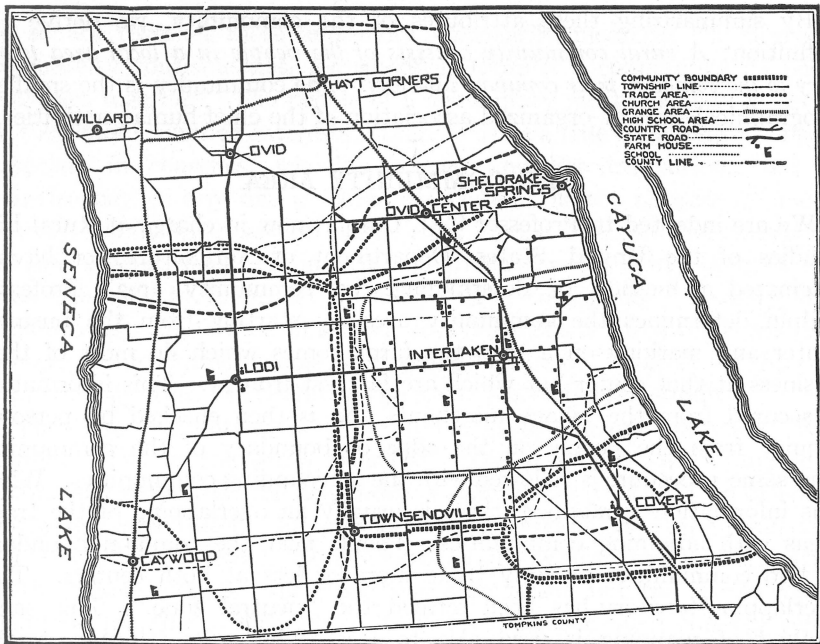


FIG. 143. INTERLAKEN COMMUNITY, SENECA COUNTY, NEW YORK, AND PARTS OF ADJOINING COMMUNITIES

approximate the center. The community center, in this sense, is that point in the community where the interests and activities of the community focus. Usually this is in a town or village. Professor Galpin uses the business center as the base point, or community center, from which to determine the boundaries of the community. However, in the older parts of the country or in hilly or mountainous regions, the trade, or business, center is not always the same as the center of the chief social activities of the people, and hence may not be the chief factor in determining the community center. Not infrequently a church, a school, and a grange hall located close together may form the nucleus of a community which does its business at a railroad-station village some distance away, possibly over a range of hills. Some communities seem to have no real center, for the store, the church, and the school may be at some distance from each other in different parts of the community; but if these, or other, institutions draw their constituency from practically the same area, then the community boundary may be determined by a composite of the boundaries of the areas of these institutions.

The term "community center" is here used in a literal sense as being the center of the activities of the community. It should be distinguished

from the "community-center idea" which refers to a building, whether it be a community house, a school, a church, or a grange hall, as a community center. Such a building in which the activities of the community are largely centered may be a community center in a very real sense, but in most cases these activities will be divided between church, school, grange hall, and the like. No one of them can then be a center for the whole community, but taken together they constitute the center in which the chief interests of the community focus. Every community must necessarily have a more or less well-defined community center; it may or may not have some one building in which the chief activities of the community have their headquarters. But if such buildings exist, they may well be called community houses or social centers.

MAPPING THE COMMUNITY

The blue-print maps showing the rural free delivery routes of a county are possibly the most convenient for use in mapping the community. These have been prepared for a large number of counties having rural free delivery and may be obtained from the Post Office Department, Washington, D. C., at a cost varying from 25 to 50 cents. The plotting of the community may be done directly on one of these maps, or a tracing may be made from it and the preliminary drawing made on the tracing and then copied on the map after all corrections have been made.

For communities for which rural-route maps have not been issued, it may be possible to obtain the topographic maps of the United States Geological Survey. These are issued in rectangular sections and perhaps two or three sections may be required to cover all of a community.

If the topographic maps cannot be obtained locally, write to the United States Geological Survey, Washington, D. C., for an index map of your state which will show the areas for which maps have been prepared and the numbers or names by which they should be ordered. As these maps are rather well covered with contour lines, it will be desirable to make a tracing from them, showing only the roads, railroads, principal streams, and town and county boundaries. Both the rural-route and geological-survey maps are on a scale of one mile to the inch, which will be found a convenient size for most purposes. If a group of people are working on a map, or if the map is to be used for exhibition purposes, a larger scale of three inches to the mile is very satisfactory⁴. In New York State the

⁴ If it is desirable to make an enlargement of the community map, this may be done by means of a pantograph, if one can be secured, or it may be done free hand as follows: If the map is on a scale of one mile to the inch, make pencil lines across the map both ways one-fourth inch apart. Rule the paper or cloth on which the enlargement is to be made with cross lines one inch apart. Now copy the details of each quarter-inch square of the base map enlarging so as to occupy the same relation to the one inch squares. When completed the enlarged map will be on a scale of four inches to the mile, and will give room for writing in the names of farm owners, schools, churches, and the like.

State Highway Commission, Albany, New York, has prepared blueprint maps of many parts of the State on the scale of three inches to the mile, there being several sheets or maps for a county. Usually these maps may be found in the office of the county superintendent of highways.

In mapping the community, first determine the "community center" as just described, and the centers of the surrounding communities. For the usual rural community in New York State the preliminary mapping may be done most expeditiously by assembling a small group of people who are well acquainted with the whole community, including two or three of the leading business men, the school principal, and the ministers and citizens from various parts of the community. The community committees of the farm and home bureaus with the addition of the above persons would form a good group for this purpose. Where it is not practicable to get such a group together, individual visits should be made to these persons.

In any event, it is important that the final determination of the community centers and boundaries be based on the judgment of a number of the leading local people who are thoroly acquainted with its conditions. It is always dangerous to give full credence to the opinion of any one person on such matters, however well informed or trustworthy he or she may be. For the same reason, if the communities in a whole county are being mapped, it will be better to have the map approved by a group of representative people who are familiar with the communities of the county, than to permit it to be done by any one person or official, however expert he or she may be. Such a county advisory committee might well be composed of the county judge, the district or county superintendent of schools, the farm and home bureau managers, the secretary of the county historical society, master or secretary of the Pomona Grange, and other representatives of county-wide agencies which have to do with all the communities.

Next determine the trade, or business, area of the community. Ask the merchants to locate on each of the roads radiating from the community center their regular customers who are farthest from the center on each road. On the map make a mark at each of the houses so located; then connect these points by straight lines. This will give the approximate trade area of the community. In the same way locate on the map the areas of the different churches, of the high school or consolidated school, and of the grange and lodges, and draw their boundaries. Draw the boundary line of each area with a different color or use a different kind of line, as shown in figure 144. Use the same color or kind of line for the boundaries of the trade areas, church areas, or school areas, respectively, of each community. Usually these areas will be sufficient to determine

the community area, altho it may be desirable to locate the area from which milk or other farm produce is drawn to this center.

It will now be necessary to pursue the same process in locating the same areas for each of the surrounding communities, for it will be found that many of these areas overlap and will be claimed by two, or sometimes three, communities. Where such overlapping occurs, it will be best to see the people living in this "neutral zone," and to learn from them to which center they go most frequently or at which center are their chief interests. Not infrequently families between two communities will trade at one center and go to church or school at another. In such cases it may not be possible to make a definite boundary between the two communities, and the boundary of each should be so drawn as to include those homes which clearly belong to it, leaving a strip of neutral territory between them.

Having determined the principal areas for each of the surrounding communities it will now be possible to draw a boundary line for the community, which will be a composite of the boundary lines of the various areas previously located, and which will include all homes whose major interests are clearly connected with this community. The community boundary line should be a heavy black line, solid or broken, which will stand out from the other area boundaries.

The interest and value of the map will be increased by mapping the state, or hard-surfaced, highways with heavier lines than the unimproved dirt roads. In mapping the various areas of the community, it will be desirable to have each farm house marked by a dot, and each school or church in the open country with a uniform symbol. If the map is large enough it will be well to write in the names of the occupants.

UNUSUAL COMMUNITIES

It should be clearly understood that it will not be possible to definitely determine all communities as easily as has just been described. Frequently it is difficult to decide whether a given area should be considered a community or a neighborhood. In some cases smaller communities are evidently being gradually absorbed into a larger community, thus being reduced to the status of neighborhoods. In a new country where neighborhood centers are far apart, the reverse may be true, and neighborhoods may be changing into communities.

A community may have more than one center. In any event, it should be clearly kept in mind that the mapping of a community merely pictures it; it does not change the facts. The essential thing is to depict the actual existing conditions and not to try and make them conform to some theory or ideal of what a community is or should be. It must be remembered,

also, that since a community is a living thing, it grows now in one direction and now in another; it expands and contracts according to the relative pull of the various centers surrounding it. If the merchants in one community allow their stocks to "run down," while new and enterprising men enter business at the neighboring town, if the churches or schools at one place are better than at another, then the more fortunate communities will enlarge their areas at the expense of those around them, and while the one community area is expanding, that of the adjacent community is necessarily contracting. For this reason the community boundary must not be considered as permanent, and it must be revised every few years if it is to be of real value. It may be well to consider two or three examples of unusual communities to illustrate the problems and principles involved.

Community or neighborhood?

In a region with a decreasing rural population there are many communities which are unable to support the institutions established. A store and a church, a school and a church, or but one or two institutions remain at the center, while the chief interests of the people are diverted to the center of the larger community, of which their local community tends to become a neighborhood. The communities in the town of Caroline, Tompkins County, New York, furnish an interesting study of these relations.

At Caroline there are a store, a church, and a district school. The local trading is done chiefly at this store and the people attend church there from the area shown by the community boundary in figure 144. Caroline Center has a church, a district school, a blacksmith shop, and two stores, serving the community indicated on the map. There are no other organizations at either place. There are eighty-five homes in Caroline and fifty in Caroline Center within the boundaries indicated. Caroline is in a valley and on a state road which passes thru Slaterville Springs to Ithaca. Caroline Center is on a hill with a dirt road leading north to Slaterville Springs, and a crushed stone road running northwest for three miles where it connects with a state macadam road now being extended from Brookton to the point marked X in figure 144.

At Slaterville Springs there are two churches, one store, a lodge hall used by the Masons and the Grange, a three-room school, which formerly carried on three years of high school but which is now a grammar school, two doctors, a hotel, a tea room, two blacksmiths, headquarters of a branch of the county Red Cross chapter, a Women's Christian Temperance Union, a post office, a telephone exchange, and a milk station. Milk is drawn here from over the territory indicated by the

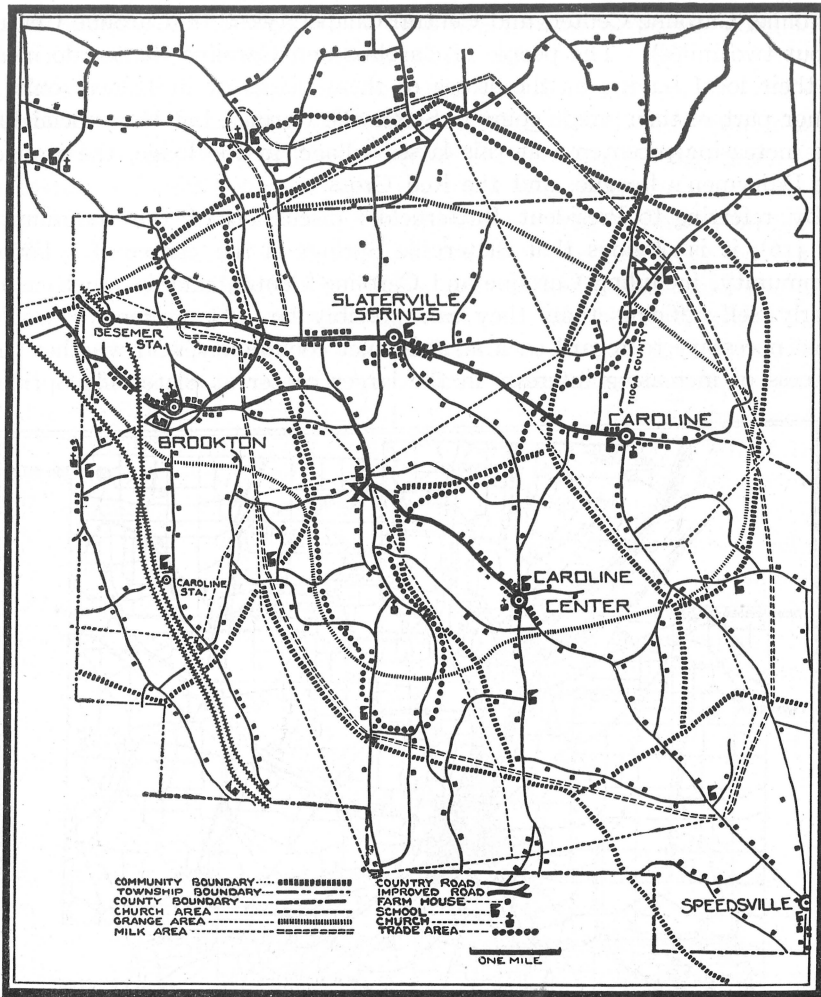


FIG. 144. CAROLINE TOWNSHIP, TOMPKINS COUNTY, NEW YORK¹

Showing community boundaries, the grange area, the milk area, and the trade area tributary to Slaterville Springs

"milk-boundary" on the map, and then taken by truck for shipment at Ithaca. Slaterville Springs is the headquarters of the local Dairymen's League for this territory; the Grange draws its attendance from the area shown by the "grange-boundary" on the map. The telephone exchange is that of the Caroline Farmer's Telephone Company which owns all the local telephones in the town (township) of Caroline. The pastor of the Methodist Episcopal church at Slaterville Springs also serves churches at

Caroline, Caroline Center, and Central Chapel (west of Caroline Center about two miles). The people of Caroline and Caroline Center do most of their local buying at the stores of these places or in Ithaca, only a minor part of their trade going to Slaterville Springs, but their social life has increasingly centered at this latter village, in the lodge, the grange, the Dairymen's League, and the Red Cross.

By referring to President Butterfield's discussion of the community (p. 416), it is obvious that Slaterville Springs is the center of a larger community, including Caroline and Caroline Center, and is much more nearly self-sufficing than they can possibly be. At present it would seem necessary to regard each as a distinct community, and whether the process of increasing interests in the larger center at Slaterville Springs



FIG. 145. TOMPKINS COUNTY, NEW YORK

Showing community centers and boundaries

will continue so that this whole area will become a definite community will depend upon future developments.

On the other hand, it should be noted that the completion of the state road westward from Brookton and connecting with the improved road to Caroline Center, will give the inhabitants of the latter village much easier access to Brookton. The office of the town clerk is at Brookton. Brookton has a railroad station and is otherwise equal to Slaterville Springs with regard to stores and churches tho it has no grange or lodge, their members going to that village. This new road will also make the territory lying south, and which forms a sort of neighborhood with Central Chapel as a center, more accessible to Brookton, so that its interests may shift to Brookton, tho they have heretofore centered most largely in Slaterville Springs to which point its people draw milk and where they do most of their trading. This valley, running north and south, with Central Chapel as a neighborhood center, forms an odd-shaped arm of the Slaterville community with a narrow neck at the cross roads X.

Another good example of what was once a distinct community, but now a neighborhood, is Varna (fig. 145) just east of Ithaca, on the state road to Dryden. A few years ago Varna had a store and a post office, and formerly a mill, but now it has only a church, a one-room school, and a railroad station. Its residents do their business and attend commercial amusements in Ithaca; the church is practically the only institution which draws them together at Varna, altho there are twenty-five houses in the village itself.

Complex communities

Allusion has been made (page 418) to communities in which the chief institutions are not located together at one center. In some cases there seem to be two, or even three, centers within the community, none of which are centers of distinct communities, but which draw from a common territory. Such may be termed "complex" communities. An interesting example of such a situation and of a community which is determined chiefly by its social, rather than its business, interests is located in southwestern Cayuga County, New York, with its chief center at Sherwood. This has been carefully studied by Dr. Warren S. Thompson, who has prepared the map (fig. 146) and furnished the following facts.

Poplar Ridge, Sherwood, and Scipioville are three small villages on the state road to Auburn. Sherwood lies midway between Poplar Ridge and Scipioville and about a mile and a half from each. At Poplar Ridge are two Friends churches, a grocery, and a hardware store. Sherwood has one store, a grange hall, and an academy. Scipioville has a store, a Presbyterian, and a Methodist church. Merrifield is a railroad

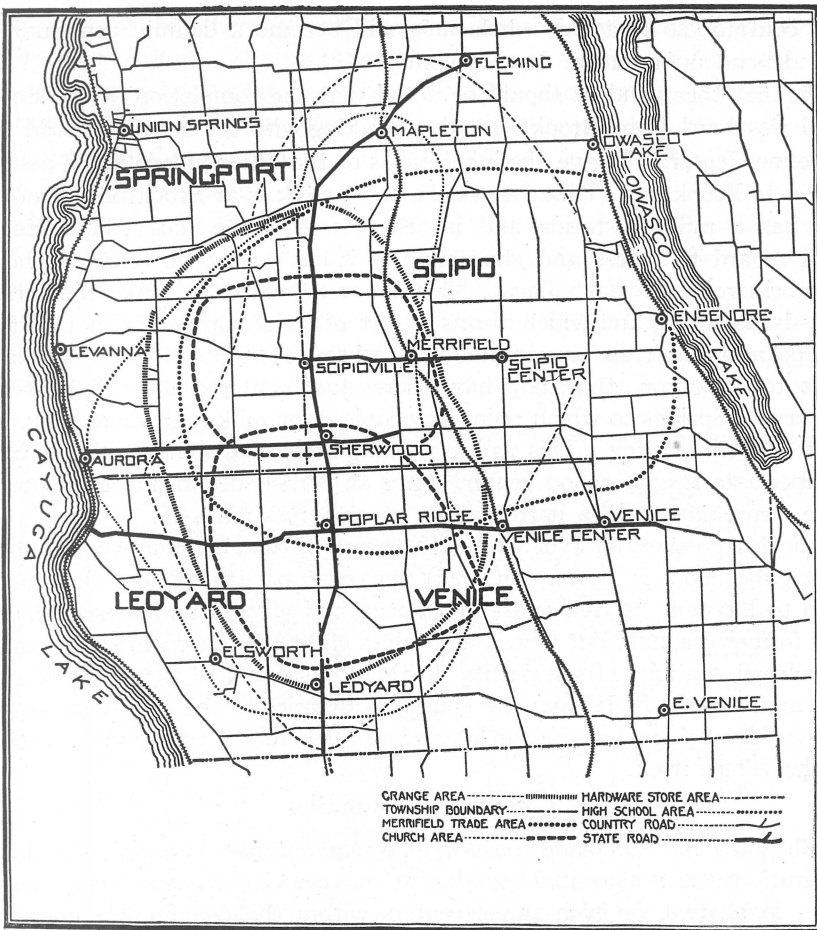


FIG. 146. SHERWOOD COMMUNITY, CAYUGA COUNTY, NEW YORK

(Prepared by Dr. Warren S. Thompson)

station two miles east of Scipioville on the Central New York Southern. Merrifield has a coalyard and a store, known as the grange store since it was started and is controlled by grangers. There is also a creamery at the same place and another general store in the depot. This grange store, coal yard and creamery draw business from over the entire area outlined on the map (fig. 146), including Poplar Ridge, Sherwood, Scipioville, and Scipio Center a mile and a half east. At Scipio Center are a store a Catholic church, and a Masonic lodge. Obviously the local trade is divided between these points, but the greater share goes to Merrifield, which is purely a business center. The church interests center at Poplar

Ridge and Scipioville and their areas overlap, both including the village of Sherwood, which has no church. The Sherwood Grange draws from a slightly larger area than do the Poplar Ridge and Scipioville churches together, while the high school has a still larger territory, including Scipio Center, and Mapleton to the northeast. The Sherwood Grange is unusually strong, having a large membership which includes most of the leading families in its area, and it has a fine building of its own. It is possibly the leading institution of the whole community. The Sherwood Academy, now a high school, was established in 1871 and has had a large influence on the life of this whole section. Undoubtedly the grange and the academy at Sherwood are responsible for making it the primary center of the community, and the boundary of the grange membership is as nearly a community boundary as any that could be established, being almost coincident with the combined church areas of Scipioville and Poplar Ridge. In a newer country a railroad-station village like Merri-field might grow so as to have high school and churches and might thus gradually eclipse the neighboring centers; but in an old country, where local institutions are firmly rooted, such a process is much slower, if, indeed, possible.

This community is also of interest as illustrating the manner in which community areas are often wholly unrelated to political boundaries. The village of Poplar Ridge is in one corner of the town of Venice, but nearly half of the territory of the Poplar Ridge community is in the town of Ledyard, and the same is true of Scipioville, located on the western edge of the town of Scipio, with half of its community in the town of Springport; while Sherwood, which is near the corner of the four towns, draws from all of them.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE COMMUNITY IN SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

A conference of the National Organizations Engaged in Rural Social Work, held in Washington in April, 1919, recognized, in the following statement, the local community as the basic unit for social organization: "In rural organization it is recognized that the local community constitutes the functional unit and the county or district, the supervisory unit."⁵

This is not the place to enter into a general discussion of the importance and nature of the rural community, for which the reader is referred to Professor Galpin's excellent discussion (footnote 3, page 417), but it may not be amiss to here indicate as evidence of the importance of careful

⁵ Proceedings, Second National Country Life Conference. Page 156.

study in locating community areas, the different institutions which are now attempting to organize their work on a community basis.

Farm bureaus

The county farm bureaus, working in cooperation with the state colleges of agriculture and the United States Department of Agriculture, very soon discovered the value of the community unit as a basis of their organization. The bureaus carry on their work thru community committees or clubs.⁶

Rural churches

Rural churches have been coming into a new sense of responsibility to the community, particularly since the war, and the nation-wide survey of rural churches now being conducted by the Interchurch World Movement seeks to determine the areas they serve in relation to community areas. The Young Men's Christian Association and the Young Women's Christian Association, altho organized as a county unit like the farm bureau, are developing their rural work on a community basis.

American Red Cross

In planning its peace-time program the American Red Cross, in both its health work and home service, is recognizing the importance of the rural community as the local unit for social work and is encouraging community organization thru specialists in this subject attached to the headquarters of each of its regional divisions.

Rural schools

The most important means of improving rural education seems to be in the consolidation of one-room district schools wherever that is feasible, and in locating high schools, of either junior or senior grade, at such points that country boys and girls may attend them and still live at home. Both of these movements involve the location of consolidated schools and high schools at community centers. In several central states legislation has been passed permitting school districts to combine into community districts for the support of consolidated schools, irrespective of township or county boundaries. The present tendency in the centralization of rural schools seems to be in the direction of locating them at the natural community centers.

⁶ Organization of a county for extension work. The farm bureau plan. By L. R. Simons. Circular 13. Office of Extension Work, North and West, U. S. Department of Agriculture.
Farm bureau organization and projects. M. C. Burritt. Farm Bureau Circular 9. New York State College of Agriculture. January 1917.

The political unit

As has been indicated in the discussion of the Sherwood community, community life usually disregards political boundaries, but often at considerable sacrifice. Thus a community may desire certain public improvements, but if they are not to the advantage of the rest of the town (township), it may be outvoted and be unable to secure them. Obviously it would be much better if the area of the community, the interests of which have a common center, might also be a political unit, and the desirability of some reorganization of the township system is being seriously advocated by students of rural government. North Carolina has led the way by passing an act⁷ permitting several school districts, which may or may not include a village center, to organize themselves into a rural municipality or corporation, with practically all the powers of a village corporation. A special act of the New Jersey legislation has incorporated the township of Plainsboro and the area tributary to it as a single community.

THE "CLOCK-SYSTEM" RURAL INDEX

Recently a Colorado farmer invented a system for numbering farms by communities, or, as he says, by "putting the farmer on the map." A city home is located by the street and number, but the farm home has had no designation by which it can be easily located. The clock system of farm numbering and mapping invented by J. B. Plato meets this need and also puts the community on the map, since the numbering for the system radiates from the community center and is limited by the community boundary, so that it is necessary to determine carefully the community centers and areas for the region indexed.

As a Colorado farmer, Mr. Plato had some Guernsey calves which he wished to advertise, but when he wrote his advertisement for the local paper, it was forced upon him that he was absolutely without any form of real address by which his farm could be found. This led him to devise the clock-system index which was first published in 1916 for the district around Fort Collins, Colorado. Since that time Mr. Plato has perfected the system, and with the cooperation of the Tompkins County (New York) Farm Bureau published, in 1919, a Clock-System Rural Index for the Township of Ulysses.⁸ A similar index is now being published for each township in Tompkins County thru the cooperation of the Tompkins County Farm Bureau, the Ithaca Board of Commerce, and the Groton Chamber of Commerce.

⁷ The North Carolina Township Incorporation Law. Chapter 128. Public Laws of North Carolina, 1917.

⁸ Published by the American Rural Index Corporation, Ithaca, New York.

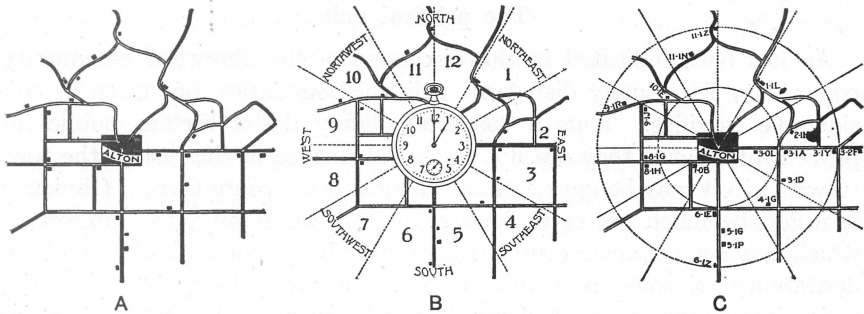


FIG. 147. A TYPICAL RURAL-VILLAGE CENTER, AND ITS SURROUNDING COMMUNITY

A, with no means of locating the farms; B, with a watch placed at its center to show the "clock-system" divisions of the community; C, with the farm homes numbered according to the "clock system"

The clock system of farm numbering may be readily understood by a study of figures 147-150⁹. Figure 147, A shows a typical country village, called Alton, with the surrounding community. Figure 147, B shows this area divided into segments radiating from the center like the hour marks on a clock.

The watch is placed with the 12 pointing directly north and each one of the twelve spaces is numbered in the same way as the watch face, because these numbers and their position are easy to remember. The 12 o'clock hour space on the watch is toward the north and therefore the space on the map is called 12. The 1 o'clock hour space is northeast of the village and therefore 1 means northeast, 2 and 3 mean east, 4 means southeast, and so on; hence the name clock-system, because a watch or clock is our key.

Figure 147, C shows the same map but with a clock-system number given to every farmhouse, school, church, and the like. The dotted circles on the map are drawn one mile apart to help show the number of miles from the village to any farm. The clock-system number that belongs to each particular farm house tells the location of that farmhouse. For example, all farmhouses east of the village and located in the 3 o'clock space have house numbers beginning with a 3. This 3 tells the direction from the village and is followed by a second figure which tells you the number of miles from the village.

Inside the first circle all house numbers end with a naught—0—because all the houses are less than a mile from the village. In the next mile zone—that is, beyond the one-mile circle—all houses have a number ending with a 1, those beyond the two-mile circle and with a 2, and so on. In every clock-system address the clock, or direction number, (1 to 12) comes first, and the miles figure (0-9) follows it, as 3-0, 3-1, 3-2, 10-0, 10-1, and so on.

Since there may be several houses in any one of the small, mile spaces as in the 3-1 space, it is necessary to have a special address for each house and this is done by giving each house a different letter as 3-1A, 3-1D, 3-1Y, and the like. This letter also helps to tell the distance from town as the letters A to L are used for houses in the first half of each mile space, and the letters M to Z for those in the last half.

Thus if one wants to find house numbered 3-1Y Alton on the map he puts his finger on the village of Alton and then follows out in the 3 o'clock direction, which is east, till he comes to the 3-1 space and the 3-1Y is found near the end of that space or nearly two miles out from the village.

⁹ The following figures and explanation are reprinted from the Ulysses Index by permission of the American Rural Index Corporation. The "clock system" is patented and cannot be used by others except by arrangement with the company.

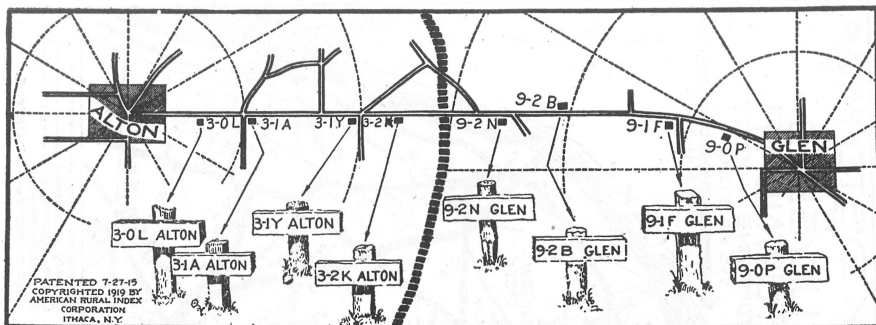


FIG. 148. A SECTION OF THE SAME MAP AS THAT IN FIG. 147

Showing the numbering from two centers, the community boundary, and how the sign boards appear at each farm

If you wanted to find John Smith, whose address is 10-1E Alton, you would know at once, even without a map, that Smith lived northwest of Alton about one and a quarter miles, and you can easily find his home on this clock-system map.

Figure 148 shows a map of a part of two adjoining communities and gives each house number as it appears on the road from Alton to Glen.

On the map, only the numbers and letter of each house is given, but on every road sign the name of the community of which that farm is a part, is printed, as 3-2K Alton or 9-2N Glen. Each of these number plates is really a guide post (fig. 149) to any one traveling thru the country.

The heavily shaded line about halfway between Alton and Glen (fig. 148) shows a part of the boundary between the Alton community and the Glen community. The dotted lines and circles from each community center extend in all directions as far as the community boundary but do not cross it.

When a township has been mapped every farmhouse belongs to one or another community.

Figure 150 gives the map of a complete township, showing the different communities outlined by heavily shaded lines and the numbers radiating from the community centers. On the map each community is divided as a spider web, into a number of small spaces by the twelve dotted lines that extend out from each village, and by the circles or parts of circles that are drawn around each central village. Each set of lines and circles extends out as far as the community boundary but does not cross it.

In the township directory which accompanies the map, the names of all house-holders are arranged alphabetically and also serially by their numbers, so that the name or location may be readily ascertained.



FIG. 149. EACH FARM HAS ITS OWN HOUSE NUMBER

This clock-system address shows that this farm is a little more than a mile northwest of Jacksonville

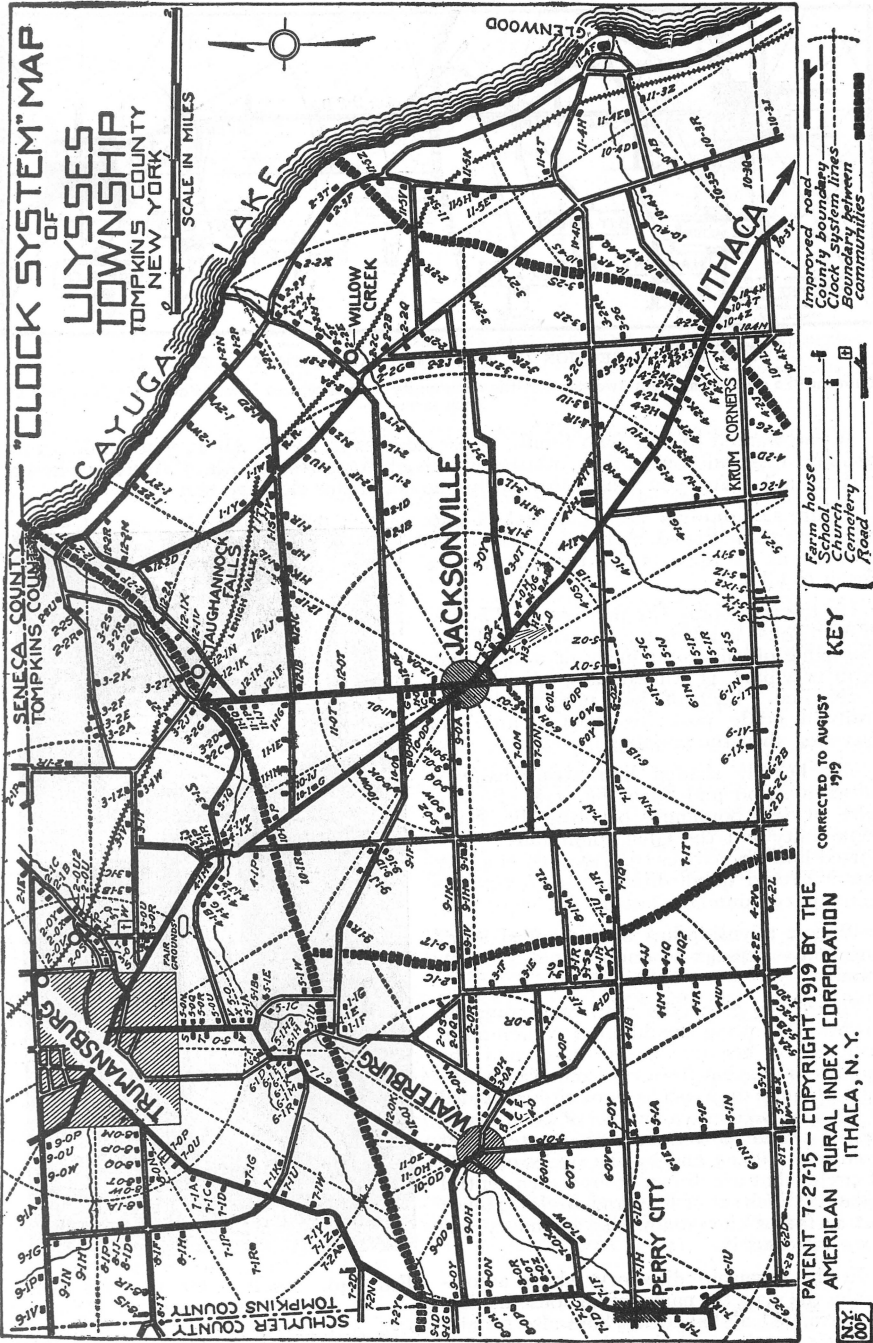


FIG. 150. "CLOCK SYSTEM" MAP OF ULYSSES TOWNSHIP, TOMPKINS COUNTY, NEW YORK

This system not only makes necessary a definite determination of the center and boundary of every community but the number itself relates the farm to its community. This is a matter of great importance, for since the abolishment of many local post offices the farmer's post-office address may be on a rural route starting from some railroad station or larger town which he visits only occasionally. The outside world knows him only by his post-office address and may never hear of the community in which he really lives. But if the Post Office Department might in some way employ such a system of numbering for rural routes, the identity of the community would be recognized and community consciousness would be promoted.¹⁰

SUPERVISION IN COMMUNITY MAPPING

Evidently such a system, which definitely locates communities, will have large social and economic significance and the determination of the community centers and boundaries should be done with the greatest care by persons qualified by training in sociology and economics.¹¹ It is of the utmost importance for the success and permanence of such a system that all the local conditions involved be considered by those persons locating the community and that the work represent the general consensus of public opinion without prejudice to the interests of any community or neighborhood.

Such mapping should always be checked by groups of representative citizens, as suggested on page 420. Should the mapping of communities on some such plan become widespread, it would seem desirable that the work be placed in charge of trained experts working either under the Federal Post Office Department or under some branch of the State Government. The state of Washington¹² has already provided by statute for a board of seven supervisors who shall approve the combination of local school districts for community activities centering either in the consolidated school or in a separate community building. A state agricultural and rural life commission, consisting of the state superintendent of public instruction, the extension director of the state college, and the extension director of the University of Washington, advises with localities concerning community organization, and its members are ex-officio members of the above board of supervisors. With the county superintendent of schools, they choose the other three members of the local board.

¹⁰ Report of sub-committee on legislation. Proceedings, First National Country Life Conference. Pages 70-72. By C. J. Galpin.

¹¹ The New York State College of Agriculture at Ithaca, New York, thru its Department of Rural Social Organization, endeavors to assist persons interested in rural community organization. It will be glad to assist in locating communities, planning community surveys, organizing community councils, building community houses, and in encouraging community singing, dramatics, motion pictures, and the like.

¹² The wider use of the school plant. By Josephine Corliss Preston. Bulletin 34, page 4. Department of Education, State of Washington. 1919.

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LESSON 158

COUNTRY LIFE SERIES

JUNE, 1920

LOCATING THE RURAL COMMUNITY

DISCUSSION PAPER

The discussion paper takes the place of the teacher in encouraging thought and self-expression on important points in the lesson, and aims to assist the reader in reviewing and applying them. It is NOT necessary to return this discussion paper in order to retain your name on the farm mailing list. If this bulletin comes to you, however, as a lesson in one of the Cornell Farm Study Courses, you must fill out, sign, and return this paper in order to receive the next lesson in the course for which you are enrolled.

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Name.....

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(In answering questions, attach additional paper if needed and number the answers.)

1. How would mapping your community help the persons who live in it and the community?

2. Do the social, commercial, and educational boundaries of your community coincide? Explain why they do or do not.

Name.....

Address.....

Date.....

(Address all correspondence to Cornell Farm Study Courses, College of Agriculture, Ithaca, New York.)